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CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A method of making reclosable packages, said method comprising the steps of:
 - feeding a supply of forming film in a package forming direction;
 - forming said forming film into a chain of bottom package portions and advancing said chain in said package forming direction;
 - feeding a supply of top film in said package forming direction;
 - laying said top film on to said chain of bottom package portions;
 - sealing said top film to said chain of bottom package portions to form a chain of packages, each of said packages including a pair of opposing film extensions on one side thereof which are not sealed to each other;
 - feeding a supply of interlocked reclosable zipper between the film extensions of said packages;
 - sealing a length of said reclosable zipper to the film extensions of each of said packages;
 - providing a supply of sliders, each of said sliders being insertable on to said reclosable zipper and adapted to open and close said reclosable zipper as said slider is moved along said zipper in opening and closing directions, respectively; and
 - for each of said packages, removing a slider from said slider supply and inserting said slider on to said reclosable zipper length.

2. The method according to claim 1 including the step of separating the film extensions of said packages prior to feeding said reclosable zipper therebetween.
3. The method according to claim 1 including the step of stumping the ends of said reclosable zipper lengths.
4. The method according to claim 1 including the step of cutting each of said packages from said package chain.
5. The method according to claim 1 wherein each of said packages includes a peel seal adjacent its reclosable zipper.
6. A method of making packages having slide zippers, said method comprising the steps of:
 - providing a supply of packages, each of said packages having a reclosable zipper;
 - providing a supply of sliders, each of said sliders being insertable on to said reclosable zipper and adapted to open and close said reclosable zipper as said slider is moved along said reclosable zipper in opening and closing directions, respectively; and
 - for each of said packages, removing a slider from said slider supply and inserting said slider on to said reclosable zipper.

7. The method according to claim 6 wherein said packages are connected together in a chain.
8. The method according to claim 7 including the step of cutting each of said packages from said package chain.
9. A method of making reclosable packages said method comprising the steps of:
- feeding a supply of forming film in a package forming direction;
 - forming said forming film into a chain of bottom package portions, each of said bottom package portions having a lip on one side thereof;
 - advancing said chain of bottom package portions in said package forming direction;
 - feeding a supply of interlocked reclosable zipper in said package forming direction;
 - sealing a length of said reclosable zipper to the lip of each of said bottom portions;
 - providing a supply of sliders, each of said sliders being insertable on to said reclosable zipper and adapted to open and close said reclosable zipper as said slider is moved along said zipper in opening and closing directions, respectively;
 - for each of said bottom portions, removing a slider from said slider supply and inserting said slider on to said reclosable zipper length;
 - feeding a supply of top film in said package forming direction; and
 - sealing said top film to each bottom package portion and its corresponding length of reclosable zipper to form a chain of packages, each of said packages having a length of reclosable zipper and a slider.

10. The method according to claim 9 including the step of stomping the ends of said reclosable zipper lengths.
11. The method according to claim 9 including the step of cutting each of said packages from said package chain.
12. The method according to claim 9 wherein each of said packages includes a peel seal adjacent its reclosable zipper.
13. The method according to claim 9 wherein halves of said reclosable zipper are insulated from one another during said sealing steps.
14. The method according to claim 9 wherein said chain of bottom package portions is comprised of at least two parallel joined chains and wherein said top film is separated along pre-applied perforations and sealed to each of said parallel chains.
15. A method of making reclosable packages, said method comprising the steps of:
 - feeding a supply of package film in a package forming direction;
 - folding said package film about a bottom crease to form opposing package walls, said opposing package walls advancing in said package forming direction;
 - feeding a supply of interlocked reclosable zipper between said opposing package walls;
 - sealing said reclosable zipper to said opposing package walls;

providing a supply of sliders, each of said sliders being insertable on to said reclosable zipper and adapted to open and close said reclosable zipper as said slider is moved along said reclosable zipper in opening and closing directions, respectively;

removing sliders from said slider supply and inserting said sliders on to said reclosable zipper; and

cross-sealing said folded film at package-width intervals to form a chain of packages, each of said packages having a reclosable zipper and a slider.

16. The method according to claim 15 wherein said sliders are inserted on to said reclosable zipper prior to said reclosable zipper being fed between said opposing package walls.

17. The method according to claim 15 wherein said sliders are inserted on to said reclosable zipper after said zipper is fed between said opposing package walls.

18. The method according to claim 16 wherein said reclosable zipper is sealed to said opposing package walls adjacent said bottom crease.

19. The method according to claim 15 including the additional steps of:
opening the reclosable zipper of each package;
filling each package; and
closing the reclosable zipper of each package.

20. The method according to claim 19 wherein the reclosable zipper of each package is opened by moving its slider from a closing end of the reclosable zipper to an opening end of the reclosable zipper.
21. The method according to claim 19 wherein the reclosable zipper of each package is opened by holding its slider in place as the package film is advanced in the package forming direction.
22. The method according to claim 19 wherein the reclosable zipper of each package is closed by moving its slider from an opening end of the reclosable zipper to a closing end of the reclosable zipper.
23. The method according to claim 19 wherein the reclosable zipper of each package is opened by means other than the slider.
24. The method according to claim 15 including the step of sealing each package above its reclosable zipper to form a tamper evident seal.
25. The method according to claim 15 including the step of cutting each of said packages from said chain of packages.
26. The method according to claim 15 wherein the ends of the reclosable zipper of each package are cross-sealed.

27. The method according to claim 15 wherein said reclosable zipper supply is stomped at package width intervals.

28. A method of making reclosable packages, said method comprising the steps of:

- feeding a supply of package film in a package forming direction;
- folding said package film about a bottom crease to form opposing package walls, said opposing package walls advancing in said package forming direction;
- feeding a supply of interlocked reclosable zipper between said opposing package walls;
- sealing one-half of said reclosable zipper to a first of said package walls;
- providing a supply of sliders, each of said sliders being insertable on to said reclosable zipper and adapted to open and close said zipper as said slider is moving along said zipper in opening and closing directions, respectively;
- removing sliders from said slider supply and inserting said sliders on to said reclosable zipper;
- cross-sealing said folded film at package-width intervals to form a chain of packages, each of said packages having a reclosable zipper and a slider;
- filling each of said packages; and
- sealing the unsealed half of the reclosable zipper of each of said packages to the other package wall.

29. The method according to claim 28 including the step of bending the reclosable zipper of each of said packages toward the package wall to which it is sealed prior to filling said package.

30. The method according to claim 28 wherein during the sealing of said one-half of said reclosable zipper to said first package wall said reclosable zipper is insulated from the other package wall.

31. The method according to claim 28 wherein during sealing of said one-half of said reclosable zipper to said first package wall said one-half of said reclosable zipper is at least partially insulated from the other half of said reclosable zipper.

32. The method according to claim 28 including the step of cross-sealing the ends of the reclosable zipper of each package.

33. The method according to claim 28 wherein said zipper cross-seals extend into said package cross-seals.